

Message Text

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ACTION SR-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 IO-14 ORM-03 DRC-01 RSC-01 AID-20

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9791

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 5242

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, AORG (UNHCR), VS, LA

SUBJECT: RELIEF ASSISTANCE INDOCHINA - UNHCR

REF: A. STATE 144009

B. SAIGON 8856

1. RE PARA 35 REF A, THERE IS, AT THIS TIME, NO VIABLE LAOS NATIONAL PLAN AND NONE IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, ALTHOUGH THE OBJECTIVES OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY ARE ACCEPTED BY ALL CONCERNED.

2. RE PARA 38 REF A, MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE (MSW) HAS REQUESTED THAT UNHCR ESTABLISH AN OFFICE IN VIENTIANE, AND THAT UNHCR HELP THE PGNU IN RETURN TO VILLAGE PROGRAMS COUNTRYWIDE.

3. RE PARA 39, REF A, THE ESTIMATE OF 700,000 DISPLACED PERSONS BY THE VIENTIANE SIDE INCLUDES ALL THOSE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY MILITARY AND POLITICAL ACTIONS DATING BACK TO MID-1950. OF THE 700,000 DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE VIENTIANE SIDE, ONLY 378,801 WERE ON RELIEF ROLLS DURING CY 1973. IT IS ESTIMATED BY U.S. MISSION THAT THE MAXIMUM NUMBER TO BE SUPPORTED DURING CY 74 WILL BE 217,000. THE NUMBER OF DISPLACED PERSONS STILL IN TEMPORARY LOCATIONS TOTALS 235,163. LOCATED IN MR II ARE 155,952 DISPLACED PERSONS AND IN MR I ARE 79,211 DISPLACED PERSONS OF WHICH 49,615 ARE IN LUANG PRABANG AND 29,596 IN BAN HOUET SAI. THESE ARE THE AREAS OF MOST CONCERN DUE TO HIGH
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POPULATION DENSITY AND LACK OF ARABLE LAND.

4. RE PARA 40, REF A, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF DISPLACED PERSONS ON THE VIENTIANE SIDE WHO WILL REQUIRE ASSISTANCE DURING FY 1975 TOTALS 217,080, LOCATED IN THE FOLLOWING MRS:

MR I	57,210
MR II	111,674
MR III	18,972
MR IV	22,724
MR V	6,500

RE: DISPLACED PERSONS WHO HAVE HAD TO LEAVE ONE ZONE OF CONTROL FOR ANOTHER, THEIR RETURN OR LOCAL REHABILITATION IS REGULATED BY ARTICLES 19 AND 20 OF THE VIENTIANE PROTOCOL OF 14 SEP 1973. HOWEVER, THE PATHET LAO SIDE HAS NOT DISPLAYED AND NOT EXPECTED TO DISPLAY A WILLINGNESS TO PERMIT HILLTRIBE REFUGEES IN MR I AND MR II TO RETURN TO THEIR ZONES OF CONTROL. MOREOVER, REFUGEES THEMSELVES HAVE NOT EXPRESSED DESIRE TO LEAVE AREAS THAT ARE NOW UNDER VIENTIANE SIDE CONTROL IN VIEW OF THEIR MOST UNDERSTANDABLE APPREHENSION OF CONTINUED PRESENCE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES AND PATHET LAO ATTITUDES TOWARD THEM.

5. RE PARA 41, REF A, IF SERIOUS POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE VIENTIANE AND V.L. SIDES WERE TO BE MADE DURING THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WHICH WE DO NOT EXPECT, A RETURN TO VILLAGE PROGRAM COULD TAKE PLACE AFTER THE WINTER HARVEST, I.E., DECEMBER 1974. AS OF JUNE 15, 1974 74,163 PEOPLE HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR HOME AREAS LOCATED IN BOTH P.L. SIDE AND VIENTIANE SIDE ZONES. THE LARGEST MOVEMENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN SOUTH LAOS, MR III AND MR IV. REHABILITATION EFFORTS FOR THOSE STAYING WHERE THEY ARE MAINLY IN MR II AND AREAS OF MR I, ARE COMPOUNDED BY THE HEAVY POPULATION DENSITY AND LACK OF ARABLE LAND. BEST ESTIMATE IS THAT AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION WITHIN VIENTIANE-SIDE CONTROLLED REFUGEE AREAS OF MR II CAN SUPPORT APPROXIMATELY 55,000 PEOPLE. THIS MEANS AT LEAST 100,000 PEOPLE WILL HAVE, AT SOME FUTURE DATE, TO BE RELOCATED IF THEY ARE TO ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY. UNTIL A UNIFIED LAOS CAN BE ACHIEVED, TWO-THIRDS OF THE MR II AND MR I HILLTRIBE REFUGEE POPULATION WILL REMAIN INDIGENT.

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6. RE PARA 42, REF A, FOR PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES RETURNING HOME, U.S. MISSION HAS ESTIMATED COSTS FOR A COUNTRY-WIDE RETURN OF REFUGEES WHO MAY WANT TO GO BACK TO PL AREAS. PLANS COVER ALL ASPECTS OF A POSITIVE RESETTLEMENT PROJECT, I.E., FEEDING, HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, SCHOOLS, MEDICAL CARE, LAND REHAB, ETC. SEE TOAID A-471, SEPT 29, 1973, WHICH DETAILS THE PHASING OF RELOCATION AND RESETTLEMENT, WE HAVE COMPUTED

ESTIMATED COSTS AT \$164 PER PERSON.

7. RE PARA 43, REF A, MISSION AGREES THAT UNHCR ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE ON BASIS OF ACTUAL NEED OF THE GROUPS CONCERNED. IT WOULD ALSO BE EXPECTED THAT DUE TO THE OVERWHELMING PROBLEMS IN MR II AND MR I, A VERY HIGH PRIORITY BE ESTABLISHED BY UNHCR FOR THESE AREAS. PGNU NOW DISCUSSING WITH VOLAGS POSSIBLE PLANS FOR INCREASING ASSISTANCE IN MRS III, IV, AND V, I.E., SOUTHERN LAOS. MISSION FORESEES THAT THE TOTAL REFUGEE PROGRAM CAN BE HANDLED IN MR III, IV AND V BY VOLAGS, OTHER DONORS, AND PGNU AS MOST RESETTLEMENT PROJECTS ARE COMPLETED OR NEAR COMPLETION AT THIS TIME. THE ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF REFUGEES IN MR III, IV AND V WHO WILL REQUIRE SUPPORT AFTER THE DECEMBER 1974 HARVEST IS 5,375 PEOPLE.

8. WE FULLY CONCUR WITH RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED REF B.
WHITEHOUSE

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